GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:21
ANSWERED ON:22.02.2001
SECURITY LAPSE IN RED FORT
GOWDAR MALLIKARJUNAPPA;T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attack by terrorists in Red Fort Complex on 24th December, 2000 has proved the security lapse on the part of Defence forces;

(b) if so, the details of casualties and the arrests made in this regard so far, along with the quantum of arms/ammunition recovered;

(c) whether lack of coordination between Delhi Police and the Army on this issue has been exposed;

(d) whether any enquiry has been conducted and responsibility fixed; and

(e) if so, the outcome thereof and the follow-up action taken thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 21 FOR 22.2.2001

Two personnel of 7 Rajputana Rifles and one civilian chowkidar of the Army Service Corps (ASC) were killed due to indiscriminate firing by two intruders in the Red Fort complex on 22.12.2000. The police arrested one Pakistani national on 26.12.2000. Another person who was reportedly a member of the Lashkar-e-Toiba was killed in an encounter with Delhi Police on 26.12.2000. The interrogation of the arrested person in Delhi led to some valuable information as a result of which another terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces in Srinagar on 27.12.2000. According to information furnished by Delhi Police, two more persons were arrested during the course of investigations. Among the arms and ammunition recovered by Delhi Police are three AK-56 assault rifles, one pistol 0.304 along with six cartridges, nine hand-grenades, eight magazines, 100 live cartridges of AK-56 rifles, 105 blank cartridges of AK-56 rifles, one knife and two bandoleers.

2. Quite a large portion of the Red Fort is under the jurisdiction of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). This area is open to visitors. ASI has contracted a civil security agency to look after the area under its jurisdiction. Different army units and sub-units located within the Red Fort arrange their own local security within the perimeters of their own area.

Notwithstanding the above, Army and Delhi Police have been holding co-ordination meetings at the working level.

3. A number of factors like the large tourist inflow into the Red Fort, location of a bazaar inside, holding of light and sound shows, distribution of tickets from a location beyond the bazaar towards the monuments inside the Red Fort complex made it possible for the terrorists to enter the Fort. The Army has ordered a court of inquiry to investigate the circumstances under which the said intrusions took place. The inquiry report is in the process of being finalised. In the mean time, certain measures, both immediate and long-term, have been/are being taken with a view to ensure that no recurrence of such incident takes place in future.